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THE CELEBRATED

SPEECH

OF

SIR *ROBERT WALPOLE*,

AGAINST

SHORT PARLIAMENTS;

TO SHEW THAT

A Parliamentary Reform

IS BOTH

UNNECESSARY AND DANGEROUS.

WITH A

PREFACE ON THE TIMES,

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY DUNDAS,

One of His Majesty's PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES of STATE;

AND

AN APPENDIX,

TO

BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

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By Joseph Cawthorne

Greenwich Park.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY DUNDAS,

One of His Majeſty's Principal SECRETARIES of STATE.

VIRTUTIS GLORIA MERCES.

SIR,

THE ſubject of a Parliamentary Reform, for the purpoſe of repealing the Septennial Act, and eſtabliſhing *ſhort* Parliaments is become (from the deſigns of party and the credulity of their adherents) of ſo much conſequence to our excellent conſtitution, and to the happy form of government it has eſtabliſhed by a *limited* monarchy, (the very reverſe of abſolute and arbitrary power) which wiſely blends the monarchical, ariſtocratical, and democratical intereſts of a free

nation, enjoying rational liberty, not founded on the *chimera of equality*, which is as impracticable as it is incompatible with the beautiful order of ſociety, called ſubordination, the very ſoul of civilization—I ſay, Sir, a ſubject of ſuch magnitude and conſequence to the very exiſtence of the conſtitution, of the government, and the proſperity of the nation, is of ſo much national importance, and it ſo much concerns every man, at this extraordinary period of political Quixotiſm and emancipation from the authorities of a well-regulated ſtate, (which are as neceſſary to the body politic, as nouriſhment is to the body natural) that I really do not know any political character to whom I could addreſs it with ſo much propriety as to Mr. Secretary DUNDAS, whoſe brilliant talents are of the firſt rate, and whoſe public exertions have the admiration of the well-informed and candid part of the nation, who will do juſtice to his animated character when party prejudices ceaſe, and the motives that gave them birth are totally forgotten. To

To you, Sir, as one of the beſt informed and moſt public ſpirited members of the ſtate, I have the honor to addreſs a few words on the preſent paſſion of the nation for a PARLIAMENTARY REFORM; or rather upon the preſent *fever of party* to bring about an innovation which, in the moſt peaceable times, is dangerous to the conſtitution, and which, at this period of popular phrenzy, would probably ſubvert it, and introduce that wild and extravagant ſyſtem of EQUALITY which deſtroys every bond of ſociety and brings civilization back to a ſtate of nature, with all the horrors of anarchy and confuſion which a well-judged ſubordination is calculated to prevent for the peace and ſecurity of mankind, who are born (in a ſtate of civilization) to be governed by the laws of God and man; or, in other words, by the eſtabliſhed authorities of church and ſtate.

As I have not the honor to be perſonally known to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, I ſhall at leaſt have the

merit of ſincerity, and credit for being influenced by truth and juſtice alone, diveſted intirely of the motives of the political pander, and by conſequence, without the venal adulation of the time-ſerving ſycophant, who has a view to his own intereſt more than to the character of his patron, and the welfare of his country.

A PARLIAMENTARY REFORM is in every body's mouth, but I believe, not within every body's capacity. The preſent paſſion of the people for reform, manifeſtly ariſes more from the temper than the virtue of the times, and, conſequently more from the ebullition of political fanaticiſm than from the conviction of the public mind that it is right and neceſſary to the public good. Like empiriciſm, it is the groſſeſt impoſition on the underſtanding, the greateſt poſſible deluſion, tending, like the infallible remedies of the phyſical impoſtor, to cure diſorders which exiſt only in a diſtempered imagination. This political fever, at the cloſe of

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the eighteenth century, requires the ſkill of the able phyſician to abate its ebullition and *delirium*, and not the poiſonous noſtrums of the empiric to enflame and render the diſorder more dangerous.

In a wiſh for a PARLIAMENTARY REFORM we do not hear the voice of the people, but the clamor of faction and the efforts of party to diſturb the public peace for purpoſes of men out of power, and not, as is artfully pretended, for the true intereſt of the nation. It ariſes more from the deſigns of factious men, who are reſtleſs under all governments, and enemies to all ſubordination, than from the conviction of diſpaſſionate men of the neceſſity of the meaſure.

I will ever admit, Sir, that much attention is due to the voice of the people; but then we ſhould diſtinguiſh between the voice of the people and the voice of faction, raiſed for the deſigns of party. As we ſhould love the people and reſpect their intereſts, ſo we ſhould diſtruſt and repel

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the factious, who, like all deſperate adventurers, hang out falſe colours, and having nothing to loſe themſelves, are clamorous to miſguide the people, and abuſe the government under which they live, that they may ſhare the miſchief occaſioned by anarchy and confuſion: theſe factious and reſtleſs ſpirits in a good government are like incendiaries, who rejoice in the calamity of a conflagration they have occaſioned, becauſe they are enriched by the plunder.

Sir, much has been ſaid, but, I believe, little underſtood by the public at large, concerning "the neceſſity of *ſhort* Parliaments, for the purpoſe of having frequent "recourſe to the elective body for the ſenſe "of the people." As this ſeems to be the principal object of the vociferous advocates for a PARLIAMENTARY REFORM, it cannot, I think, be better refuted than by the valuable and unanſwerable Speech of Sir Robert Walpole, at a period when a clamorous faction made juſt the ſame noiſe under his admi-

adminiſtration as they do at preſent upon that ſubject.

Sir Robert has very fairly and ably ſtated the caſe, and ſhewn, to the conviction of every candid mind, the wide difference between the effects of ſeptennial and triennial Parliaments; proving clearly the former to be the beſt calculated for the ſalutary purpoſes of a wiſe and efficient government; and that the latter has a contrary tendency, being big with the greateſt poſſible danger to the dignity and intereſt of this nation, by introducing a ſyſtem of confuſion that would ſubvert our conſtitution, ſo juſtly admired by the ableſt ſtateſmen of all nations, for having given us the happieſt form of government.

Sir Robert truly obſerves, that "the nature of our conſtitution ſeems to be miſtaken by the advocates for a parliamentary reform." *Short* Parliaments, or a frequent appeal to the people, is incompatible with the dignity of government and with the intereſt

tereſt of the people governed; becauſe it tends to perplex executive government, and to defeat the ſalutary purpoſes of the public. Too frequent an appeal to the conſtituent body convulſes the nation; it inflames the factious and ſeditious, and is ſubverſive of the authorities of the ſtate, on which the public ſecurity are founded; that diſorder is ruinous to the liberty and property of the people, which can only be ſecured by conſtitutional authority and neceſſary ſubordination.

The true ſenſe, like the true intereſt of the people, is what every good government will ſeriouſly attend to, as the ſoundeſt policy; but the *ſovereignty* of the people is a libel on every government, becauſe it is repugnant to all government, and to the policy of every ſtate; which, good or bad as the government may be, has ever had, and neceſſarily muſt ever have a ſupremacy, or a controuling ſovereign power. There never was, nor can ever be, ſuch an exiſtence

ence in any country as a ſovereign people, which is a perfect ſoleciſm in politics. The people are the *ſubjects* of every ſtate to which they belong, and the deſcription of ſovereign ſubjects is an abſurdity in terms.

Indeed adventurers, ſuch as the reſtleſs, the factious, and ſeditious, who amuſe the people, to betray them, may ſtile the people the ſovereign power; but, even ſuch peſts of ſociety know that the ſovereignty is not in the multitude, but in the conſtitutional authority that governs and controuls them for the proſperity and ſecurity of the community at large.

The ſupremacy is, beyond a doubt, in the government of all countries, and not in the people governed. It is quite as abſurd to ſay, the ſovereignty of the people at large, as the ſovereignty of the ariſtocracy or the democracy. It is impoſſible there can exiſt a ſovereignty in the people, or a ſtate of equality. Even in France, at this period of deluſion and political fanaticiſm, the ſove-

reignty is not in the people, for that is abſolutely impoſſible, but in their repreſentatives who have uſurped the ſovereignty and controul the people; and a contracted ſovereignty, or the ſovereign ſubjects of a ſtate is, as I have obſerved, an abſurdity in terms, a ſoleciſm in politics, a *monſtrum horrendum*.

Were the Engliſh, after the example of the French, to talk of the *ſovereignty of the people*, they would talk like madmen. The ſovereign authority is veſted by the conſtitution not in the people at large but in a limited monarchy, conſiſting of three eſtates or component parts of conſtitutional government, which makes a happy mixture of powers that have enacted the mildeſt laws, and eſtabliſhed the wiſeſt ſubordination.

This is the majeſty of the ſtate and the ſovereignty of the Britiſh Conſtitution, which is manifeſtly not veſted in the public, but in the happieſt ſyſtem of government, for the proſperity and ſecurity of the people, bleſſed with ſuch a well-poiſed conſtitution as that we boaſt of and all Europe admire. That

That "all power is derived from the peo-"ple, and ſhould revert to the people" is a doctrine as dangerous in its application, as it is deluſive in its principle. Society was certainly formed by the concurrence of the people for the general happineſs and ſecurity; and hence, all authority was, in that ſenſe, derived from the people for the purpoſes of the people. But ſtill the bonds of ſociety and of government, which were made for the good and ſecurity of the whole, are ſacred, and not to be diſſolved capriciouſly, or wantonly to endanger the general happineſs; but only when there is an abſolute neceſſity from the abuſe of the eſtabliſhed authorities, and the perverſion of public juſtice.

For inſtance: Were the conſtitutional powers of the King, Lords, and Commons ſo perverted (as they have been) as to endanger the liberty of the nation which eſtabliſhed that form of government, then there would be an abſolute neceſſity of re-

ſiſtance to that abuſe which would *again* juſtify a revolution: But when, as at the preſent glorious period of national proſperity and diſtinguiſhed rank among the powers of Europe, our moſt excellent conſtitution is happily preſerved, and there is a juſt *equilibrium* of authority in the monarchical, ariſtocratical, and democratical parts of government to promote the dignity of the nation, and the true intereſt of the people, then an attempt to reform ſuch a *limited* monarchy and well-poiſed government, would be an attempt to make the nation *felo de ſe*, and to ſign the *death warrant* of that proſperity and ſecurity we enjoy from our excellent conſtitution, which would be ſubverted in the mildeſt reign, and at the moſt glorious period of our hiſtory.

I do therefore perfectly agree with that able miniſter, Sir Robert Walpole, that thoſe who are advocates for *ſhort* Parliaments, under the cloak of a Parliamentary Reform, either miſtake the nature of our conſtitution

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or are the greateſt enemies to our government, that is, to our happy eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate.

Sir Robert, like an able politician, well acquainted with the principles and effects of our conſtitution, obſerves, that " the " beauty and perfection of it conſiſt in the " happy *mixture* of our government," or the component parts of the conſtitution, which together create the ſovereignty of the nation, but not the ſovereignty of the people, for there cannot be any ſuch popular ſovereignty, ſince a ſupremacy, or controul over them, muſt be lodged ſome where. That happy mixture of the powers of King, Lords and Commons is the very ſoul of our conſtitution; as the political Trinity, or the co-operation of the three eſtates of the kingdom, wiſely prevents the abſolute power of monarchy, the ambitious power of ariſtocracy and the tyrannical power of democracy. In the happy union of the three, their wiſdom and ſpirit are ſecured, and their ſeparate defects

defects are avoided. It is difficult to ſay which of the three ſeparately would be the worſt ſort of government. If abſolute monarchy becomes arbitrary and oppreſſive, democratical government becomes tyrannical: The one may do great miſchief by abuſing conſtitutional authority, the other more miſchief by confounding all diſtinctions, and ſubverting all authority. If, therefore, abſolute monarchy (which is often rendered arbitrary by the pride of ariſtocracy) is degrading to civilized ſtates, the more abſolute ſovereignty of the people, who are influenced by their paſſions, is perhaps more degrading to civilization, and the more ruinous ſyſtem; for, as anarchy and confuſion are the greateſt tyranny, ſo they are the greateſt calamity.

Sir Robert has ſaid nothing of the tyranny and fatality of ſuch a ſyſtem of confuſion and *equality*, but he has ably ſhewn the calamity of democratical government, which he truly ſays is as inconſtant as the wind,

wind, and never ſteady long enough to promote any good purpoſe; whilſt its want of ſtability and efficacy defeats the wiſeſt meaſures, and gives birth to the moſt unhappy conſequences. And, with great truth and ability, he concludes, that as we value our incomparable conſtitution, and regard our happineſs as a free people, *engaged in commerce which requires peace and ſecurity*, we ſhould guard againſt the danger of running too much into that ſort of government which is commonly called popular or democratical, which, by giving more than a conſtitutional power to the people, deſtroys the happy *equilibrium* of our conſtitution, and defeats the wiſeſt purpoſes of a limited monarchy and a well-poiſed government: a misfortune which ſeptennial Parliaments have prevented, and which triennial or ſhort Parliaments (now ſo weakly contended for) would bring about, by too frequent an appeal to the people; a meaſure that would convulſe the nation, unhinge government,

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and ſubvert the conſtitution, which is an event that we cannot too much dread, or too carefully avoid.

Hence, it is evident that the violence and oppreſſion of abſolute governments did not alarm Sir Robert Walpole ſo much as the impolicy and danger of giving to the people too great a ſhare in the government which he thinks they will abuſe and ſubvert: In ſuch popular governments men are reſtleſs, factious, and ſeditious, and often deſperate, corrupting the minds of the credulous part of the people to raiſe diſcontents, ſeditions and inſurrections. This able miniſter, therefore, truly ſaid, that *ſhort* Parliaments, either annual or triennial, would produce that misfortune by too frequent an appeal to the people, which would throw ſuch a weight of influence into the ſcale of democracy as would deſtroy the happy mixture of authority, which Sir Robert obſerved was the beauty and perfection of our conſtitution, and the very ſoul of our goveanment, for a demo-

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cratical government would ſoon become the moſt abſolute, and perhaps the moſt tyrannical government.

But Sir Robert has ſo ably treated this ſubject, and ſo clearly ſhewn the folly of a Parliamentary Reform, ſo far as it relates to *ſhort* Parliaments, and the fatality of adopting the meaſure, that I beg leave to refer Mr. Secretary DUNDAS to his celebrated Speech, which proves unanſwerably that no reform is neceſſary, and that a wiſe and *firm* government, (regardleſs of the clamour of the factious, and the contagion of the ſeditious) will, at this period, as under his adminiſtration, ſupport the conſtitution and enforce the law.

I cannot with propriety take you, Sir, before the public, upon a ſubject of ſo much conſequence and expectation, without ſaying ſomething of your character as a Miniſter. I have not choſen you, as other dedicators do, to be the patron of my intereſt, but to be the advocate of our incom-

parable conſtitution, under one of the beſt ſovereigns that this or any other country can boaſt of. And I have made this choice becauſe no gentleman in office has been ſo much miſrepreſented by the factious and reſtleſs ſpirits, which Sir Robert alludes to, and which that able Miniſter knew were ſo troubleſome in all governments, and ſo dangerous in a free ſtate.

Although the abuſe of ſuch incendiaries is as much diſregarded by Mr. DUNDAS as it was by Sir Robert, yet to thoſe who are not ſufficiently acquainted with the character of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and may be miſguided by the miſrepreſentations of party, I venture to obſerve, that the brilliant talents and public ſpirit of the Right Honourable Gentleman have rendered the moſt eſſential ſervices to this country. Mr. PITT, like a wiſe miniſter, ſets the higheſt value upon his ſplendid abilities and important ſervices, and I am ſure Sir Robert Walpole would have been as proud of ſo able a colleague. The

The ſarcaſm of newſpaper-writers and the malice of party men are, to the character of Mr. DUNDAS, like the little blemiſhes of a great beauty, or like the ſpots we diſcover in the glorious ſun! True merit is invulnerable, and true patriotiſm is inflexible: in vain does envy attack the one and malice miſrepreſent the other. By ſupporting the authorities of the conſtitution, and promoting the purpoſes of the nation, the Right Honourable Secretary will be admired when faction ceaſes, and the principles that gave it birth are totally forgotten. At that period, which I hope is at no great diſtance, candour will do juſtice to the animated character of Mr. DUNDAS and ſtile him one of the ableſt and beſt friends of his country.

Great minds, conſcious of their beſt intentions and endeavours for the public good (unſhaken by the alarming deſigns of party) will oppoſe, with a ſpirit which our conſtitution inſpires, the tide of public delu-

ſion and the torrent of popular phrenzy, and thereby convince the miſguided part of the people that no foreign enemies are ſo dangerous as the domeſtic foes, who diſturb them with FALSE ALARMS, and who encourage them by falſe pretences of reform to make unneceſſary reſiſtance to the conſtitutional authorities of their country, to convulſe the nation, and to overthrow the beſt government in Europe for the purpoſes of factious and deſigning men.

It will perhaps be expected that I ſhould ſay one word on the preſent complexion of Europe, and the fears of ſome people that, like contagoin, it may greatly affect the peace and intereſt of this country. With regard to Europe in general our NEUTRALITY has ſhewn the juſtice of this nation in not interfering (as the French unjuſtly did in the diſpute between this country and America) with the internal government of other nations, or with a defenſive war which did not immediately concern us. While

France

France acted *defenſively* againſt Auſtria and Ruſſia our neutrality was a proof of the greateſt wiſdom and juſtice: but that neutrality became, in my apprehenſion, injuſtice and criminality when the Britiſh nation ſuffered the French to act *offenſively*, and to invade the Netherlands and endanger Holland our ally; and alſo to invade Savoy and other peaceable ſtates.† Tamely to ſuffer ſuch a conduct to diſturb the general tranquillity is not only an act of impolicy in regard to the balance of power in Europe, which has ever been conſidered as a great object to England, but it is giving ſanction to the contagious principles of the French revolution, and making them univerſal, and as dangerous to the body politic as peſtilence is to the body natural. The French by declaring war againſt *all* monarchical governments have themſelves deſtroyed our neutrality, and rendered our interpoſition inevitable *as a check to the ſtrongeſt, and a protection to the weakeſt powers of Europe*, for the ſecurity

† Written in November.

ſecurity and tranquillity of the whole, which are now endangered by a mad ſyſtem of EQUALITY that is more to be dreaded than the confederacy called the Family Compact, for it is really a political peſtilence tending to diſturb all nations and to overthrow every government*.

With regard to domeſtic affairs, or our *peace at home*, I ſee nothing to fear from either the doctrine of the French Republic or

* Since this obſervation was made it appears, by ſtate papers, that Lord Grenville, Secretary of State for foreign Affairs (a miniſter of diſtinguiſhed talents and public ſpirit) has illuſtrated this principle with his uſual perſpicuity and energy, by ſhewing that the French have, in a manner unprecedented in hiſtory, violated the law and the right of nations: for, by the new ſyſtem which they have adopted, they ſeem to have uſurped an univerſal right of ſupremacy, and have declared war againſt the authority and intereſt of all the nations of Europe, in which they claim a right to infuſe the contagion of their Quixotiſm. And although they required the NEUTRALITY of all Europe at their revolution, on the principle that "other nations had nothing "to do with their *internal* government;" yet, contrary to their own doctrine, they now uſurp the right which they denied to other countries, and have not only interfered with the internal government of other nations, but claim a right to ſubvert all governments not founded on the principles of their new-fangled and abominable ſyſtem.

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the advantage which the reſtleſs, the factious, and ſeditious have taken of that ſpirit of political Quixotiſm which pervades France, if we can depend upon a *firm* adminiſtration, guided by the conſtitution and ſupported by the law. As we have nothing to envy in the French Revolution, ſo we have nothing to fear from a compariſon with our moſt excellent conſtitution*. As to the doctrine of EQUALITY it is really more ridiculous than any thing in the works of Cervantes. It will be as harmleſs in this country, under a ſpirited adminiſtration, as it is

* "We may venture to affirm, that notwithſtanding the weight of our taxes (occaſioned by former wars) and the burthen of our poor-rates, (increaſed by thoſe taxes) there is more wealth poſſeſſed, and more happineſs enjoyed by the body of the people in this country, than now is, or ever was, in any country of equal extent within the knowledge or memory of man. Then wretched and deteſtable indeed muſt he be who would put to hazard ſo much happineſs for empty ſpeculation and experiments which have ever proved fatal. But why do I ſay to the hazard? I ſay, who would perſuade us to exchange ſo much happineſs for certain and univerſal devaſtation and miſery." VIDE *Importance of Preſerving the Eſtabliſhed Government, &c.* p. 69.

ſuperficial.

ſuperficial. It is a doctrine created by fear and adopted through neceſſity, which the members of the National Convention do not believe themſelves, and only adopted the name not the principle as a perſonal ſecurity againſt the danger of popular phrenzy, and to promote the deſperate purpoſes of a tyrannical faction.

No ſuch eccentric notions of EQUALITY can ever enter the heads of Engliſhmen, except ſuch factious and reſtleſs ſpirits as exiſt by the confuſion and misfortunes of their country. The RIGHTS of MAN is a title that inſults civilization and degrades wiſe ſubordination in this enlightened age. THOMAS PAINE is a weak writer, who will convince few, but faction have had the art to make him the inſtrument to corrupt many. Our newſpapers, more than the eccentric opinions of that political adventurer, have raiſed to notice a man who poſſeſſes neither talents or principles for a formidable ſtateſman. This Engliſh-American-French-

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man may lead a credulous multitude into the moſt erroneous opinions of monarchical government, but can never convince the well-informed and candid part of mankind, who require a better ſecurity for their liberty and property than the eccentricity of political empirics: they require the underſtanding of a Machiavel and a Lock, and the principles and animation of a Sydney and a Chatham.

Paine is a conceited interloper in politics, betraying great ignorance of cauſes and conſequences in the ſcience of government. He has more of a *Charlatan* than the ſhrewd politician and the ſound ſtateſman. He writes to the paſſions of the multitude, and not to the underſtanding of the enlightened part of ſociety. His aim is to inflame the paſſions of the former, more than to convince the reaſon and excite the virtue of the latter. He writes ſuperficially without a competent knowledge of hiſtory, and draws concluſions at random, without knowing

the difference between monarchical and republican ſyſtems of government, and the effects of commerce, wealth and luxury. He aims at the total overthrow of the former to eſtabliſh the latter, without a ſufficient knowledge of either. He exclaims againſt monarchical ſupremacy as inconſiſtent with the RIGHTS of MAN, without making a diſtinction, and ſhewing the difference between the Rights of Man in a ſtate of nature, and the Rights of Man in a ſtate of civilization, in which the natural rights are delegated for the general welfare by the ſacred and indiſſoluble bonds of ſociety. A ſtate of nature is certainly a ſtate of equality, but a ſtate of civilization eſtabliſhes authority and ſubordination as a ſocial and ſacred compact, and as the greateſt bleſſings of ſociety. Paine diſcovers as much ignorance of the powerful effects on the human mind, of wealth and luxury, by the extenſion of commerce, as he does of the difference between monarchical and republican

lican governments. He aims at eſtabliſhing a general commonwealth or an univerſal republic, without conſidering that the ſituation and genius of different nations require different ſyſtems of government*. In England, as in France, a monarchical government was ſubverted; and yet, experience of their miſtake ſoon convinced the Engliſh, as it muſt convince the French, that monarchical government was preferable to a democratic or popular ſyſtem of government: for if monarchical governments are defective, republican governments are perhaps more ſo; for, if it be contended that the former become abſolute and arbitrary, it muſt be admitted that the latter become tyrannical. Theſe truths admitted, prove

* "From an impartial view of human ſociety, we may ſafely pronounce that the Sovereign of Nature no more intended the ſame ſyſtem of policy, the ſame mode of rule, the ſame form of government for every ſituation, for every country and people; than the ſame ſoil and climate, the ſame mode of life, the ſame genius and diſpoſition of the inhabitants." *Importance of Preſerving the Eſtabliſhed Government, &c.* p. 7.

to a demonſtration, that the middle ſyſtem is ſuch a *mixed government, or a limited monarchy as ours*, in which the dignity and energy of the one and the principles of the other are happily blended to check deſpotiſm and oppreſſion of monarchy, and the folly and tyranny of democracy. Then "becauſe there ~~are~~ ſome defects in that excellent conſtitution, and ſome abuſes in the exerciſe of our government, ſhall we therefore diſſolve the whole ſyſtem in hopes of ſupplying its place by an air-built fabric, propoſed by ſuch a viſionary enthuſiaſt as Thomas Paine; without conſidering what may be the conſequence of ſuch a raſh attempt?" Forbid it heaven! Forbid it juſtice! Forbid it public virtue!

Mr. Fox has juſtly obſerved that "the "works of PAINE were a LIBEL on the con- "ſtitution and government of this country*"; but

* Becauſe "they manifeſtly tend to ſubvert the fundamental principles and change the eſſential forms of our conſtitution; which every friend to the good order and happineſs

but the Right Hon. Gentleman would have been nearer the truth if he had ſaid they were a libel on the underſtanding and principles of this enlightened nation, and the greateſt inſult that could be offered to the government under which Paine was born. Nevertheleſs, an eminent council, who is a member of the ~~conſtitution,~~ *legiſlature* has profeſſionally attempted a defence of PAINE in a court of law; but, inſtead of refuting the groſſeſt of all libels on government, he proves, as clear as any mathematical demonſtration, that his client has been guilty of the great crime of TREASON againſt the ſtate, to overthrow the conſtitution, and change the eſtabliſhed government by reſiſtance to authority and rebellion; and

happineſs of this country ought to execrate; and deprecate as the greateſt calamity, the public tumult, riot, and violence they are calculated to produce: which, inſtead of reformation muſt prove the entire diſſolution of a government already far advanced in improvement, and diffuſing both on its own ſubjects, and the human race in general, more happineſs than all the world beſides can preſent." *Importance of Preſerving the Eſtabliſhed Government.* p. 73, 74.

conſe-

conſequently, to dethrone the King, by the ſubverſion of monarchical government, which is the conſtitutional government of this country, and found, by experience, to be the beſt adapted to it: for, under the colour of œconomy and the artful pretence of promoting the rights and intereſt of the people by the reduction of taxes and other incumbrances; it is manifeſt that the main object of Mr. PAINE's writings is "to per-"ſuade the nation to diſſolve their pre-"ſent ſyſtem of government, and to ſub-"ſtitute a purely republican or democratic "ſyſtem in its ſtead:" A ſyſtem which is not congenial with the diſpoſition of the people, nor conducive to the intereſt of the ſtate: the reſtoration of monarchy is the beſt proof in its favour becauſe it is founded on experience and conviction: and the mixed ſyſtem eſtabliſhed at the revolution (in which democracy has a conſiderable ſhare) is found to be the moſt congenial and the beſt form of government for this country.

And

And here it may be proper to obſerve, to ſuch men as are for new-modelling our ſyſtem of government, the vaſt difference between the ſituation and genius of this nation and that of France and America. The Engliſh are a people not only ſeparated from the reſt of the world by ſituation, but are different alſo from other nations as well in the contemplation and temperament of the natural body as in the conſtitution of the body politic. Any other form of government, however well adapted to the ſituation and genius of other nations, would not be congenial to a country ſo very different to the continental nations of Europe and America. England may, in times of perfect tranquillity and good humour, when there is not the leaſt danger of a ferment, admit of ſuch improvements in her ſyſtem of government as the general will requires and the ſoundeſt policy juſtifies*; but can never, con-

* "Governments no doubt, may grow into ſuch enormous, ſuch univerſal abuſe, as may juſtify reſiſtance, and even

conſiſtent with her true intereſt, think of a revolution to alter the conſtitutional foundations of her government. Improvements of the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem, by a judicious and *well-timed* reform of abuſes, the true friends of the nation may wiſh from motives of the pureſt public virtue, and attempt with the greateſt ſafety to the conſtitution; but "they know how dangerous it is to ſhake

even a change of conſtitution. But this caſe, whenever it unfortunately happens, will always be marked by this particular circumſtance; it will be ſo evident, ſo immediately preſſing, ſo critically deciſive; that all will ſee and feel the neceſſity of it: conſequently, the parties will have entirely changed their ground. It will be no longer a *Faction*, like the preſent, ſeeking to ſubvert the good order and eſtabliſhed government of the ſociety; but it will be the ſociety univerſally riſing to vindicate themſelves againſt a faction aſſuming an authority over them. In this caſe, founded on abſolute neceſſity, there will be no occaſion for force or violence; the change will be acquired by the virtue and wiſdom of the people, and effected by the general and voluntary conſent of the ſociety (as at the reſtoration of monarchy) without one good citizen attempting or wiſhing to oppoſe or prevent it. But, except in a caſe ſo critically preſſing and deciſive as this, *every man who dares but to propoſe or point to public violence is, and ought to be, conſidered by all as a* TRAITOR *to his country and a peſt to human ſociety.*"

"pillars,

"pillars, to touch foundations. Men of "abandoned characters and deſperate for- "tunes may find their account in the ſub- "verſion of government, and throwing ſoci- "ety looſe from the reſtraint of laws; be- "cauſe they can loſe nothing, but may have "ſome chance to gain amidſt the general "wreck and confuſion. But the body of "the people in general, and every man of "principle and property in particular, have "every thing valuable to loſe and nothing "to gain by public confuſion and general "diſorder. And when ſuch allow them- "ſelves to be drawn into ſchemes which "tend to ſubvert public order and tranquil- "lity, they become the certain dupes, either "of the ill deſigns and intereſted views of "others, or of their own folly, avarice and "ambition." The dupes of ſuch men as Cataline, Cromwell, and Paine, who, under the pretence of ſalutary reform, to preſerve the rights and promote the intereſt of the people, attempt to ſubvert the conſtitution

and change the eſtabliſhed government by *violence*. "For it is plain from the ſpirit in "which the publications of Paine are writ-"ten" (ſays a ſenſible writer) "that their "deſign is not to procure a *well-timed* redreſs "of abuſes, but to make them a pretence "for totally ſubverting the conſtitution. "Their direct tendency is intirely to diſ-"ſolve the bonds of ſociety, to excite the "people to throw off all reſtraints of law "and government, and to reduce this hap-"py country to the ſame wretched ſtate "that France is now in. And as this is the "direct tendency of theſe writings, ſo it is "alſo the evident deſign with which they "were written. Let any one mark the ge-"neral ſpirit and prevailing character that "runs through them, and he will find the "predominant feature by which they are "particularly diſtinguiſhed, to be an un-"conquerable ſpite and malice againſt the "Britiſh Government, which ſeems to be "the *ruling paſſion* of Mr. Paine."

As

As Mr. Paine, by his new doctrine, ſtiled the RIGHTS of MAN, has alarmed the people and armed them againſt monarchical government, and thereby aimed at the total overthrow of our conſtitution in particular; ſo the French, by their new ſyſtem of government, are endeavouring, in general, to ſubvert *every* monarchical government upon his levelling principles: they have declared war againſt every ſyſtem of government that is not congenial with their own, which is a libel on the underſtanding, the rights and intereſt of all the powers of Europe. But notwithſtanding this criminal conduct of Paine to his *native* country, and the folly and arrogance of the French in adopting a ſyſtem that violates the rights of all Europe, and endangers their eſtabliſhed governments, yet Paine does not poſſeſs the art of perſuaſion: he writes with ſtrong prejudices to the paſſions of the multitude, and not the underſtanding of an enlightened nation: he miſtakes the abuſes which,

from the luxury of the times, creep into all governments, even in the beſt governed ſtates, for a neceſſity to change the eſtabliſhed government, and affects to remove a partial evil by a general calamity. Mr. Paine has a wonderful facility of aſſerting, but wants the art of perſuaſion and the power of conviction. He is neither a Machiavel, or a Lock, or a Clarendon, or a Sydney, or a Chatham; and therefore, as a writer on the ſcience of government, no miſchief can ultimately be dreaded from the reaſoning faculty of this political Charlatan, who is the child of caprice, and the creature of faction: nor from the levelling principles of the French Revolution, which are made the ground of ſedition and inſurrection with the worſt reaſon in the world; becauſe ſuch principles, which level all diſtinctions and ſubvert all rights, are the ſtrongeſt contraſt to the true ſpirit of Liberty or national virtue which republican principles inſpire: for, under the cloak of liberty they

they have eſtabliſhed a ſyſtem of injuſtice and tyranny. Placed on the high ſeat of deſpotiſm they exerciſe a more than ſovereign authority, and arrogantly dictate a ſyſtem of government to other nations: an authority which Rome in her greateſt ſplendour did not aſſume: that wiſe and powerful Republic, eminently diſtinguiſhed for juſtice and liberality, reſpected monarchical governments, and never in the great ſplendour of her arms and the vaſt power of her influence, preſumed to claim a right to ſubvert them. I mean, from what I have ſaid of Paine and the French ſyſtem, that we ſhall have no miſchief to dread while we have an able and *firm* adminiſtration, reſolutely determined (in ſpite of inſurrections into which the thoughtleſs are hurried) to preſerve the conſtitution and ſupport the law of the land. The tricks of faction (with Paine in one hand and French principles in the other) will then become as harmleſs in this country as the new ſyſtem of government in

France

France is viſionary, and the clamour of REFORMERS will be like cannon on a public day, noiſy without effect. Our peace and the ſecurity of our proſperity depend upon the ſpirit of His Majeſty's Miniſters, whoſe meaſures, both domeſtic and foreign, deſerve the confidence of the nation. Let a well-choſen and active adminiſtration be *firm*, and conſtitutional government will be invulnerable. Traitors to their country may, in times of public deluſion and infatuation, aim a dagger at the bowels of the conſtitution; but, although all men are by nature mortal, our conſtitution may, by our means, be rendered immortal; for it is the firſt duty of every Engliſhman to believe it can never die.

Sedition may, for a while, eclipſe the virtue of the mildeſt reign, and the wiſdom of the beſt adminiſtration; faction may rear its head to conceal the ſplendour of our actions and the happineſs of our ſituation, under a moſt excellent Monarch; but, like the ſun, obſcured by invidious clouds, the nation will recover its

its tranquillity, and ſhine with greater ſplendour. A ſpirited perſeverance in a good cauſe forces ſucceſs; and there cannot be a better cauſe than that of conſtitutional government by which our liberty and property are ſecured. If therefore miniſters are firm and reſolutely determined to preſerve the conſtitution *unaltered*, the deſigns of party will be diſappointed; the noiſe of faction will ceaſe; and the people, recovered from the deluſion of ſedition, will think themſelves happy under the mild government of a limited monarchy, enjoying the ſubſtance while reformers embrace the ſhadow of liberty.

By a firm executive power, I do not mean a government of coercion, nor an adminiſtration obſtinately in the wrong, but firmly determined in the right to preſerve the principles of the conſtitution, the dignity of the legiſlature, and the energy of executive government, which are all as neceſſary to genuine liberty, to ſubſtantial juſtice, and to national

national peace and proſperity, as the ſoul is neceſſary to the body corporate. The body politic is like the body natural: the conſtitution of the one muſt be preſerved like the conſtitution of the other. There are deſperate quacks in politics as well as in phyſic. The diſorders to which both are ſubject ſhould have ſkilful phyſicians. A good phyſician will know the diſorder before he applies a remedy: he will then adapt the healing art to the conſtitution, and not bend the conſtitution to empiriciſm: he will guard againſt inflammatory diſorders and ebullitions, and carefully prevent the fever of the brain. An able and honeſt ſtateſman will treat the conſtitution of his country in the ſame ſkilful manner, to prevent that *delirium* or popular phrenzy, which makes reſtleſs ſpirits factious, and as dangerous to the body politic as contagion or the peſtilence of Turkey is to the natural body.

Both in politics and medicine the phyſician will remember the fatal conſequences of raſh

raſh experiments and dangerous innovations, unneceſſarily departing from the eſtabliſhed and long-approved ſyſtem, ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on the human mind by the fatal experience of the *Spaniard*, who enjoyed all the bleſſings of the happieſt conſtitution, but being perſuaded by the reſtleſs ſpirit of the times to reform a conſtitution that was full of vigour, it occaſioned his diſſolution, and the following epitaph as a legacy to mankind, and a warning to all diſturbers of the conſtitutions of the bodies natural and political:

"*Eu eſtavo bueno; mas, por eſtar melhor, eſto aqui.*"

I was very well, enjoying all the bleſſings of the beſt conſtitution; but not being ſatisfied with thoſe ineſtimable bleſſings, my credulity and folly have brought me to the grave."

I hope the dear-bought experience of the *Spaniard* will be a leſſon to my countrymen to be ſatisfied with their incomparable conſtitution, and not ſuffer themſelves to be led away by raſh experiments and unneceſſary innovations, purſuing the ſhadow while

they quit the ſubſtance of national felicity. The leſſon is indeed a fine one, and applies forcibly to the preſent ſpirit of political adventure which pervades France and has infected this country: I am ſure it will not be thrown away on the enlightened and candid part of my compatriots; who know the value of private property and public proſperity, and are perſuaded that they can only be preſerved by conſtitutional liberty bound with the *ſilken cords* of nation authority, and not by the extravagant ſyſtem of EQUALITY, which is a *chimera* that, were it practicable, would level all diſtinctions, reſtore a ſtate of nature, of incivilization, and barbariſm; confounding all qualities and ſubverting all order, ſo beautiful and neceſſary to ſociety; looſening bonds the moſt ſacred, and deſtroying the ſecurity of perſons and property——a ſtate of confuſion and danger which the laws of God and man forbid——a calamity which all civilized nations have endeavoured to prevent, but which the reſtleſs ſpirit of the times is endeavouring to bring

bring about, like a political contagion, to bury, with the authority of ſovereignty and the obligations of ſubordination, the ſecurity and happineſs of mankind, under the very extravagant idea of *equal rights*, or a *ſtate of equality*, the former of which are as abſurd as the latter is impracticable. Men are indeed born alike and die alike, but they cannot live alike without deſtroying the beautiful order and the happy effect of things, thereby defeating the glorious purpoſes of the creation and the works of God and man.

To prevent the return of *Chaos*, with which even this country ſeems to be threatened in the mildeſt reign by the levelling doctrine of political fanaticiſm, and to abate the fever of parliamentary or legiſlative reform, which is more inadmiſſible at this period than even in the clamorous days of Sir Robert Walpole, let us hope that His Majeſty's Miniſters will be as reſolutely in the right as the enemies of good order are obſtinately in the wrong. The executive power, faith-

ful to the conſtitution and to the government it has eſtabliſhed, muſt be firm and unſhaken, YIELDING NOTHING TO THE SPIRIT OF PARTY AND THE EBULLITION OF FACTION. The public peace and happineſs ſtand upon a precipice from which we look down with horror. Now then, in the words of the illuſtrious Chatham, "Now is the mo-"ment of returning happineſs or accom-"pliſhed ruin." Now is the time to be reſolute and to ſteer the State Bark with courage through the ſtorm. Without acting in this manner, with the reſolution which public virtue inſpires, the praiſes which we ſo liberally beſtowed on our anceſtors, for our excellent conſtitution, are converted into the moſt bitter ſatires againſt ourſelves; we admire them for eſtabliſhing a government that has ſubdued tyrants, and confeſs our own cowardice in fearing to purſue a faction that endeavours to ſubvert that glorious conſtitution which is the ſecurity of our liberty and property. Reſolution is the ſoul of executive government,

ment, and mercy belongs to none who deſerve to ſuffer, according to the ſtrict rules of equity, for endangering the public peace and ſociety. And ſince every thing is at ſtake, every exertion will, undoubtedly, be made to preſerve inviolate the conſtitution, that authority and ſubordination may remain in *ſtatu quo*, unaltered by domeſtic foes at a period the moſt diſtinguiſhed for ſucceſs with foreign enemies.

I have repeatedly and warmly contended for a *firm* adminiſtration, as the beſt, and indeed the only means of political ſalvation and redemption from the calamity of popular phrenzy, which threatens not this country alone but all Europe with the horrors of anarchy and confuſion, which are worſe than the horrors of war. I am far from meaning the preverſeneſs of obſtinacy or the raſhneſs of coercion; but that Miniſters be ſteady to the principles of the conſtitution, and not ſhaken by every blaſt of faction. If, by a ſpirited perſerverance, they are true to the dignity of authority, the peo-

ple,

ple, who are now deluded by new and viſionary doctrines of government, will recover from *the fever of the times*, and, diſcovering their true intereſt, they will return to the duty they owe to their country, and the juſtice they owe to themſelves.

I know that the danger of popular infatuation, from the contagion of French principles, is great enough not only to frighten cowards, but to make the braveſt cautious. Caution differs from fear as much as virtue from vice. Caution ſecures victory, and fear ruin. Caution is the virtue of government between fear and raſhneſs. In the preſent circumſtances fear is the worſt of the two extremes, for it betrays the ſuccour that reaſon offers. Addiſon finely obſerves, that "Fear admitted into public councils be-"trays like Treaſon". And *Plato* ſays, Courage is the ſcience of things terrible, and makes a wiſe government judge well in danger: that to avoid danger executive government muſt look at it boldly, and act with that vigour which wiſdom requires for the common

common ſecurity. Upon ſuch a principle of ſound policy, Reſolution will preſerve what puſillanimity would deſtroy. Every bleſſing of ſociety depends upon a *firm* adminiſtration, determined to preſerve the ſpirit and ſubſtance of the conſtitution whatever their enemies may do with the ſhadow. So firmly are the preſent Miniſters fixed by the ſucceſs of their meaſures and the proſperity of the nation, and ſo well ſupported by the conſtitution (which is the barometer of their conduct, and the ſource of all their meaſures) that nothing but want of reſolution can poſſibly give a victory to thoſe enemies of the public peace, who are endeavouring to convulſe the nation with the ſtrangeſt ſyſtem of liberty and equality that ever entered the head of man.

Let us then hope, from the proofs of public ſpirit we have already ſeen in executive government, that, on this trying occaſion (which ſtakes the peace, the liberty and proſperity of the nation) we ſhall have a *firm* adminiſtration, with a reſolution as fixed

fixed as fate, to ſupport the dignity of the legiſlature, and the energy of government, unſhaken by the threats of public diſturbers: for, I am perſuaded that, notwithſtanding the preſent noiſe of faction and the fears of weak minds from the effect it has on the funds, Miniſters will have nothing to dread if they perſevere with unabated reſolution, in the principles they have adopted, and the meaſures they have purſued as the ground of their conduct, and the objects of their much-reſpected adminiſtration.

I have the honor to be,
With the moſt diſintereſted admiration,
SIR,
Your obedient,
And moſt humble Servant,

AN ENGLISHMAN,

Who denies the Rights of Man to EQUALITY, which levels all Diſtinctions, deſtroys all Order, and ſubverts the Conſtitution of every Government.

PAR-

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

THE SPEECH

OF THE CELEBRATED

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,

AGAINST *SHORT* PARLIAMENTS,

TO SHEW THAT

A PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

IS BOTH UNNECESSARY AND DANGEROUS.

" MR. SPEAKER,

" ALTHOUGH the queſtion for *A Repeal of the Septennial Act* has been already ſo ably oppoſed and ſo fully anſwered, that there is no great occaſion to ſay any thing farther againſt it, yet I hope the Houſe will indulge me with the liberty of giving ſome of thoſe reaſons which induce me to be againſt the motion.

" In general I muſt take notice, that the nature of our conſtitution ſeems to be very much miſtaken by the gentlemen who are advocates for *ſhort* parliaments. It is certain, that ours is a mixed government, and the perfection of our conſtitution conſiſts in this, that the monarchical, ariſtocratical and democratical forms of government are mixed and interwoven in ours ſo as to give us all the advantages of each, without ſubjecting us to the danger and inconveniences of either. The democratic forms of government, which is the only one I have now occaſion to take notice of, are liable to theſe inconveniences;—that they are generally too tedious in their coming to any reſolution, and ſeldom briſk and expeditious enough in carrying their reſolutions into execution: that they are always wavering in their reſolutions, and never ſteady in any meaſures they reſolve to purſue; and that they are often involved in factions, ſeditions, and inſurrections, which expoſe them to be made the

tool

tool, if not *the prey of their neighbours:* therefore, in all the regulations we make with reſpect to our conſtitution, we are to guard againſt running too much into that form of government which is properly called democratical: this was, in my opinion, the unhappy effect of the Triennial Act, and that will again be the unhappy effect ſhould that impolitic meaſure ever be reſtored.

"That *triennial* elections would make our government too tedious in all their reſolves is evident; becauſe, in ſuch caſes, no prudent adminiſtration would ever reſolve upon any meaſure of conſequence 'till they had felt not only the pulſe of the parliament but the pulſe of the people; and the miniſters of ſtate would always labour under this diſadvantage, that as ſecrets of ſtate muſt not be immediately divulged, their enemies (and enemies they will always have) would have a handle for expoſing their meaſures, and rendering them diſagreeable to the people, and thereby carrying, perhaps, a new

election againſt them before they could have an opportunity of juſtifying their meaſures, by divulging thoſe facts and circumſtances from whence the juſtice and wiſdom of their conduct would clearly appear.

"Then, Sir, it is by experience well known, that what is called the *populace* of every country, are apt to be too much elated with ſucceſs, and too much dejected with every misfortune; this makes them wavering in their opinions about affairs of ſtate, and never long of the ſame mind; and as this Houſe is choſen by the free and unbiaſſed voice of the people in general, *if this choice were ſo often renewed*, we might expect that this Houſe would be as wavering and as unſteady as the people uſually are; and it being impoſſible to carry on the public buſineſs without the concurrence of this Houſe, the miniſters would always be obliged to change their meaſures as often as the people change their minds.

"Theſe effects, perplexing and hazardous

ous to the miniſtry, and dangerous to the public intereſt and ſecurity, would be the unhappy and inevitable conſequence of *ſhort* parliaments. With ſeptennial parliaments, Sir, we are not expoſed to either of theſe misfortunes; becauſe, if miniſters, after having felt the pulſe of the parliament, which they can always ſoon do, reſolve upon any meaſures, they generally have time enough before the new elections come on, to give the people a proper information, in order to ſhew them the juſtice and the wiſdom of the meaſures they have purſued; and if the people ſhould, at any time, be too much elated or two much dejected, or ſhould, without any cauſe, change their minds, thoſe at the helm of affairs have time to ſet them right before a new election comes on.

"As to faction and ſedition, Sir, I will grant that in monarchical and ariſtocratical governments, it generally ariſes from violence and oppreſſion; but in democratical govern-

governments, it always ariſes from the people having too great a ſhare in the authority of government. For in all countries and in all governments, there always will be many factious and unquiet ſpirits, but more particulary in free ſtates, who can never be at reſt either in power or out of power: when in power, they are never eaſy unleſs every man ſubmits intirely to their direction; and when out of power, they are always working and intriguing againſt thoſe that are in, without any regard to juſtice, or to the intereſt of their country.

"In popular governments, like our own, ſuch men have too much game, they have too many opportunities for working upon and corrupting the minds of the people, in order to give them a bad impreſſion of, and to raiſe diſcontents againſt thoſe that have the management of the public affairs for the time; and theſe diſcontents often break out into ſeditions and inſurrections. This, Sir, would, in my opinion, be our misfortune, if

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our parliaments were either annual or triennial: by ſuch frequent elections, there would be ſo much power thrown into the hands of the people, as would deſtroy that *equal mixture*, or nice equilibrium of authority, which is the beauty of our excellent conſtitution: in ſhort, our government would become a democratical government, and from thence might very probably diverge into a tyrannical. In order, therefore, to preſerve our conſtitution, in order to prevent our falling under tyranny and arbitrary power, we ought to preſerve that law which I really think has brought our conſtitution to a more equal mixture, and, conſequently, to a greater perfection than it was ever in be-before the ſeptennial law took place.

"As to bribery and corruption, Sir, if it were poſſible to influence, by ſuch baſe means, the majority of the electors of Great Britain, to chuſe ſuch men as would probably give up their liberties; if it were poſſible to influence, by ſuch means, a majority of the

the members of this Houſe to conſent to the eſtabliſhment of arbitrary power, I would readily allow, that the calculations made by the gentlemen of the other ſide were juſt, and their inference true; but I am perſuaded that neither of theſe is poſſible. As the members of this Houſe generally are, and muſt always be gentlemen of fortune and figure in their county; is it poſſible to ſuppoſe, that any of them could, by a penſion or a poſt, be influenced to conſent to the overthrow of our conſtitution; by which the enjoyment, not only of what he got, but of what he before had, would be rendered altogether precarious? I will allow, Sir, that with reſpect to bribery, the price muſt be higher or lower, generally in proportion to the virtue of the man who is to be bribed; but it muſt likewiſe be granted, that the humour he happens to be in at the time, the ſpirit he happens to be endowed with, adds a great deal to his virtue. When no encroachments are made upon the rights of

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the people, when the people do not think themſelves in any danger, there may be many of the electors, who, by a bribe of ten guineas, might be induced to vote for one candidate more than another; but if the court were making any encroachments upon the rights of the people, a proper ſpirit would no doubt ariſe in the nation; and in ſuch a caſe, I am perſuaded that none, or very few, even of ſuch electors, could be induced to vote for a court candidate; no, not for ten times the ſum.

"There may, Sir, be ſome bribery and corruption in the nation; I am afraid there will always be ſome: but it is no proof of it, that ſtrangers are ſometimes choſen; for a gentleman may have ſo much natural influence over a borough in his neighbourhood, as to be able to prevail with them to chuſe any perſon he pleaſes to recommend; and if upon ſuch recommendation they chooſe one or two of his friends, who are perhaps ſtrangers to them, it is not from

thence to be inferred, that the two ſtrangers were choſen their repreſentatives by the means of bribery and corruption.

" To inſinuate, Sir, that money may be iſſued from the public treaſury for bribing elections, is really ſomething very extraordinary, eſpecially in thoſe gentlemen who know how many checks are upon every ſhilling that can be iſſued from thence; and how regular the money granted in one year for the public ſervice of the nation, muſt always be accounted for the very next ſeſſion in this Houſe, and likewiſe in the other, if they have a mind for any ſuch account. As to the gentlemen in offices, if they have any advantage over country gentlemen, in having ſomething elſe to depend on beſides their own private fortunes, they have likewiſe many diſadvantages: they are obliged to live here in London, with their families, by which they are put to a much greater expence than gentlemen of equal fortunes who live in the country: this lays them under a very

very great diſadvantage with reſpect to ſupporting their intereſt in the country. The country gentleman, by living among the electors, and purchaſing the neceſſaries for his family from them, keeps up an acquaintance and correſpondence with them, without putting himſelf to any extraordinary charge; whereas, a gentleman who lives in London, has no other way of keeping up an acquaintance or correſpondence among his friends in the country, but by going down once or twice a year at a very extraordinary charge, and often without any other buſineſs: ſo that we may conclude, a gentleman in office cannot, even in ſeven years, ſave much for diſtributing in ready money at the time of an election; and I really believe, if the fact were narrowly inquired into, it would appear, that the gentlemen in office are as little guilty of bribing their electors with ready money, as any other ſet of gentlemen in the kingdom.

"That *there are ferments often raiſed among*

the people without any juſt cauſe, is what I am ſurpriſed to hear controverted, ſince very late experience may convince us of the contrary. Do not we know what a ferment was raiſed in the nation, towards the latter end of the late queen's reign? And it is well known what a *fatal change* in the affairs of this nation was introduced, or at leaſt confirmed, by an election's coming on while the nation was in that ferment. Do we not know what a ferment was raiſed in the nation ſoon after his late Majeſty's acceſſion? And if an election had been allowed to come on, while the nation was in that ferment, it might perhaps had as fatal effects as the former; but, thank God, this was wiſely provided for by the very ſeptennial law which is now wanted to be repealed! And, as ſuch *ferments* may hereafter often happen, I muſt think that frequent elections will always be dangerous; for which reaſon, as far as I can ſee at preſent, I believe, I ſhall at all times think it *a very dangerous experiment to repeal the Septennial Act.*"

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COMMENT.

THESE, Sir, were the maſterly ſentiments of that able ſtateſman, Sir ROBERT WALPOLE, upon the ſubject of *ſhort* Parliaments (the principal object of a parliamentary reform) at a period that was leſs diſtinguiſhed than the preſent, for national dignity and public proſperity; and more diſturbed by the reſtleſs and factious ſpirits that are always troubleſome in a free or popular government, becauſe licentiouſneſs borders on liberty, and ſeems to be inſeparable from it.

At the preſent period, diſtinguiſhed above all others for public proſperity at home, and the vaſt influence of our government abroad, a period in which there is *no juſt cauſe of a ferment*, this admirable ſpeech refutes the opinion,

nion, and I truſt will overthrow the deſigns of falſe patriots, who, with the maſk of public virtue, are clamorous for *ſhort* parliaments, in order to have frequent recourſe to the elective body for the ſenſe of the people, which is a meaſure of the greateſt deluſion, for Sir Robert has ſhewn to a demonſtration, that it would produce the moſt ruinous conſequences, and defeat the very purpoſes the people wiſh to promote.

By ſuch an impolitic and hazardous meaſure, ariſing from a parliamentary reform, the legiſlature would be unſettled; executive government unhinged; the public in a continual ferment; the funds as unſteady as the wind, all confidence in government (the ſoul of the ſtate and of commerce) would be deſtroyed, and the dignity and proſperity of the nation ſubverted.

Theſe, Sir, would be the fatal effects of the ſingle meaſure for triennial or ſhort parliaments, the miſchief of which is ſo little underſtood by the people at large, that they

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are eaſily impoſed upon by the reſtleſs and factious part of the nation, who, like incendiaries, thrive by the calamity of public confuſion. Hence, that juſt obſervation of Sir Robert Walpole, "in popular governments "*ferments* are often ariſing among the peo- "ple without any juſt cauſe*." The fatal change

* "There is no law of nature the preſervation of which is of ſo much importance to the univerſal community of mankind; there is none which ought, therefore, to be guarded with ſuch jealous cares, to be held ſo ſacred and inviolable as the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem of government in every civil ſociety. What ſource has been productive of ſo much calamity to the human race? what cauſe has ſo often defolated whole countries, and drenched the earth with blood? daring and deſperately wicked indeed as the men muſt be who can engage in ſchemes to ſubvert the civil government of the country in which they live; yet could they foreſee, or did they allow themſelves to conſider, the extended, the accumulated ſcene of human miſery through which they muſt wade to the attainment of their ends, it would, we might preſume, check even the moſt deſperate, and the moſt daringly wicked would ſhrink with horror from their purpoſe. At leaſt we may ſafely affirm, that were theſe dreadful conſequences ſeen and conſidered by thoſe who are blindly drawn into their ſchemes; and who are always the dupes, and too often the victims of their inſidious deſigns, every good citizen, every man of property, every man

change in our affairs which ſuch a ferment had occaſioned, and the fear of another equally fatal to this country, made Sir Robert reſiſt it, as became an able guardian of the public peace, proſperity, and ſecurity.

In that arduous taſk, a *firm* and ſpirited adminiſtration ſucceeded; by convincing the public of the folly and fatality of ſuch a ferment, which, whilſt it convulſed the nation, and ſhook public credit, by affecting

man of common underſtanding would ſhrink with horror from ſuch paricides; and they would ſoon find the due reward of their actions, eſpecially were it conſidered, that in in almoſt every attempt to ſubvert or change the government of any ſtate, not only have the immediate conſequences been dreadful; but, in general, the iſſue has proved entirely ineffectual to the end propoſed, or, at leaſt pretended, and the attempt fatal to the ſociety itſelf. So that, however artful and deſigning men may find their account in public diſorder, in attempts to ſubvert the government of their country, from hopes of raiſing themſelves on its ruins; the body of the people have always had too much reaſon to repent, and long regret ſo deſperate an undertaking. And that not only when, as is generally the caſe, artful men, devoid of principle, and deſperate in their fortunes, have, under the ſpecious pretence of removing grievances and rectifying abuſes, attempted to embroil and ſubvert the government." *Importance of Supporting the Eſtabliſhed Government.* p. 14, 15.

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the funds, it endangered all the good purpoſes of the people. The public were convinced by an appeal to their reaſon, and not to their paſſions; the ferment ceaſed; tranquillity was reſtored; the funds regained their credit; and confidence in executive government (the ſoul of public credit and of national proſperity) returned. Thus, the conſtitution was happily preſerved, and the reſtleſs and ſeditious ſons of faction were totally diſappointed by the conſtitutional and reſolute conduct of executive government! The ſame will happen on the preſent occaſion, under an adminiſtration who have the confidence of the public, if His Majeſty's miniſters have courage (as there is every reaſon to believe from the ruling principle of their conduct, and the well-timed meaſures hitherto purſued) to act from the public ſpirit and unſhaken *reſolution* to preſerve the conſtitution with the dignity and energy of government, for the true intereſt of a free, enlightened, and ſpirited

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nation, who are too juſt to be the promoters of a ferment *without any cauſe*, and too brave to be the dupes of a reſtleſs and ſeditious faction.

The fatal change which has been occaſioned in this country, and is always to be dreaded by a *ferment*, is the ſtrongeſt poſſible reaſon for the ſtrong arm of government to prevent ferments by the moſt ſpirited conſtitutional exertions. It is the firſt and greateſt duty that executive government owes to the ſecurity of the people. Short parliaments, which are calculated to keep the multitude in a continual ferment, are to be dreaded as a political peſtilence*. All innovations

* " In all moderate governments, like our own, there are better and ſurer methods of redreſs than force and violence. A cool, firm, and rational oppoſition to abuſes, ſteadily and prudently perſiſted in, will ſcarce ever fail of ſucceſs; eſpecially in a government ſo popular as that under which we live: almoſt the only thing that can fruſtrate and diſappoint the ſucceſs of ſuch meaſures, is want of patience, and, without waiting a *proper time*, precipitating oppoſition into riot and violence; for then every man of character

innovations in church and ſtate are hazardous; and, if ever a parliamentary reform is neceſſary, it is not when the nation is in a ferment, to hazard a change of government fatal to the conſtitution, and to the true intereſt of the people governed.

Were there no other reaſons the preſent reſtleſs ſpirit of faction and ſedition, (by which the enemies of our excellent conſtitution are endeavouring to ſubvert it) ren-

character and principle, who before might deſire and endeavour to obtain a redreſs of abuſes, will, in this caſe, think it neceſſary to ſtrengthen the hands of government; as well knowing, that the worſt abuſes of government muſt be preferable to ſuch means of reform, or any redreſs that can be obtained by ſuch means. For inſtance: what improvement or advantages did the Britiſh Government derive from the iſſue of a civil war that raged in and laid waſte this country for near twenty years in the laſt century? were not the people glad to reſume their former government, if with ſome appearance of reform in the conſtitution, with ſtill greater abuſes in the adminſtration than ever? On the other hand, what important advantages, what a happy change was effected by a calm, but firm and ſpirited proceeding at the glorious Revolution in the ſame century, almoſt without a ſword being drawn, or a drop of blood being ſhed." *Importance of Preſerving the Eſtabliſhed Syſtem of Government*, p. 15, 16.

ders this period the moſt improper for a parliamentary reform; and therefore ſuch a reform is abſolutely impracticable in the preſent ferment raiſed by faction, without any juſt cauſe, and at a period the moſt glorious of our hiſtory: a period eminently diſtinguiſhed for public proſperity and national dignity: a period highly flattering, in which Great Britain holds the firſt rank among the powers of Europe.

Innovations, which are always dangerous, may be attended to under the mild and perſuaſive influence of reaſon and public tranquillity; but not by the compulſion of the factious and ſeditious part of the nation, who diſturb the peace of the public under falſe pretences of public virtue. His Majeſty's miniſters (who deſervedly poſſeſs the confidence of the nation from their general principles, and their judicious meaſures in Europe and Aſia) would therefore be TRAITORS to the conſtitution and to the ſecurity of the public, were they, as guardians of the

public

public peace and proſperity, to encourage a ferment by puſillanimouſly yielding to the ſpirit of ſedition, and the clamour of faction.

To conclude: from what has been obſerved, it is manifeſt, that this is not the time for a parliamentary reform, but, on the contrary, the moſt improper time; and although ſome alteration may be admiſſible under the auſpicious circumſtances of national tranquillity, and confidence in executive government (the ſoul of every ſtate) it is at preſent a SNARE which miniſters ſhould avoid as they would the peſtilence. Having nothing to fear from foreign enemies, they ſhould look at domeſtic foes with courage, and remember, that "Fear admitted into public councils, betrays like treaſon."

Plainly muſt it appear to every friend to this country, that our conſtitution requires (for the dignity, the proſperity, and ſecurity of the nation) that the preſent groundleſs ferment ſhould be looked at boldly, and reſiſted with all the virtue and wiſdom of national

tional authority, which is wiſely lodged not in the ſovereign alone, as an abſolute monarchy; or the people at large, as a democratic ſupremacy; but in executive government: a government admirably founded on *the principles of the conſtitution and the laws of the land*, for the intereſt of the people, and the dignity of the ſtate, which are the two great objects of a free, a happy, and powerful nation.

I cannot cloſe theſe remarks on the turbulent ſpirit of the times, or the cauſe aſſigned for it, and the conſequences of a national ferment, in language more applicable to the important ſubject, than by tranſcribing another paſſage in page 18, 19, 20, 21, of a well-written, and well-timed production of the Rev. Mr. Browne, intitled, *The Importance of Preſerving the Eſtabliſhed Syſtem of Government.*

"If the abuſes and cauſes of diſcontent, whether real or pretended, exiſt not in the form and conſtitution of the government,"

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(which is not pretended by any of the people of this country, notwithſtanding the groſs miſrepreſentations of Paine) but in the œconomy and adminiſtration of it, nothing but madneſs, or the more deteſtable intention of ſacrificing to private ſelfiſh views every thing ſacred and valuable in ſociety, could ſuggeſt even a *pretence* to violate and overthrow the conſtitution itſelf. The abuſes and calamities of a perverſe adminiſtration of government may be but temporary, and in their utmoſt extent can reach but few; and even in the worſt adminiſtered government theſe calamities muſt be mild and gentle, when compared with the all-inviolating miſery, violence and outrage, that muſt attend an attempt to overthrow by force even the weakeſt eſtabliſhed government.

Since, then, the moſt diſaſtrous calamity that can befal any country, is the breach and ſubverſion of its civil government; of all objects in which human ſociety are intereſted,

tereſted, none ought therefore to be held ſo ſacred, to be viewed with ſuch awful forbearance, as the fundamental laws and principles of the ſtate, the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem and form of government in any regular ſociety; every breach of which, muſt certainly be atoned for by the blood of thouſands. Hence, the moſt fatal peſt that can be let looſe upon any country or people is, the man who dares attempt to embroil the public, to diſſolve the bonds of civil union, and throw ſociety looſe from the protection and reſtraint of law. Every good citizen, every man not void of principle, will tremble at the thought; nor ought publice vengeance to ſpare for a moment the man (whether a *Paine* or a *Cataline*) who, in ſentiment or action, dares to point towards ſuch a cataſtrophe.

Every civil war, every attempt to ſubvert civil government, recorded in hiſtory, will ſufficiently atteſt the truth and juſtice of theſe obſervations in general: and if we

apply

apply them to the preſent attempt to overthrow the power of that government, ſo long, and ſo happily eſtabliſhed in this country in particular, the unwarrantable raſhneſs and precipitancy of the undertaking muſt even at firſt view ſtrikingly appear. But if we take into the conſideration the many natural advantages of the conſtitution of that government, above any that this or former ages can boaſt of, the happy and flouriſhing ſtate of the country under that conſtitution, with the perſonal virtue and moderation of the preſent prince on the throne; add, I ſay, all theſe conſiderations, and language muſt labour in vain to deſcribe the folly, the madneſs, not to ſay, the impiety and wickedneſs of the attempt, whether it proceeds from the extravagant and impracticable ſyſtem of *Paine*, or from an ill-timed wiſh for a PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

APPENDIX.

TO THE

TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

YOU enter on the ſtage of action in the moſt important criſis that ever happened. Not only the fate of Europe, but of the whole world, depends on the temper of Parliament. It is that temper (and God grant it may be a good one!) that muſt direct the exertions of Great Britain: and, humanly ſpeaking, thoſe meaſures, which more or leſs affect all other powers, muſt determine the fate of great part of the world.

If Great Britain, under an able and ſpirited adminiſtration, takes wiſe meaſures, and purſues

purſues them reſolutely and ſteadily, with activity, courage, and vigour, ſhe may break the *enchantment* of French politics, and preſerve, with her own liberties, the independence of all the other ſtates of Europe. When Britain has the wiſdom and vigour to convince the world of this truth, the powers of Europe will purſue their true intereſts, and form a powerful confederacy againſt the hoſtile ſyſtem of France: for it is moſt certain, that each has a natural intereſt oppoſite to the contagious principles of the French, and therefore, *every one has a battle to fight with France*, to prevent the overthrow of their eſtabliſhed governments, and the calamity which ſuch an event muſt produce.

France may ſkilfully employ her arts to blind, corrupt, and terrify; but this deluſion is ſo groſs, and their ambition ſo dangerous, not to this country alone, but to all Europe, that not a ſingle power can long remain under the fatal deluſion. Holland, cor-

rupted and menaced, has often become the dupe of France; for which ſhe, like this nation, had to thank *falſe patriots*, who ſacrifice the honour and intereſt of their country to the views of their party. For the truth is, Holland, being almoſt incloſed by France, has often trembled at the ambition of that great and reſtleſs power; and never had ſhe more reaſon than at the preſent period, when ſhe is threatened with a formidable, and almoſt irreſiſtible invaſion. The greateſt part of the Dutch are, from both intereſt and inclination, zealous for Great Baitain, but the Roman Catholics are numerous, and the magiſtrates are cautious; beſides the jealouſies of the hereditary Stadtholder, related to the Houſe of Hanover, have been ſkilfully employed by the French, and all other methods uſed to blind, corrupt, and terrify the Hollanders. Theſe arts had ſo good an effect, at no diſtant period, that the Dutch weakly ſuffered to prevail in their Republic the intereſt of the very

very neighbouring power, at whoſe ambition and duplicity they juſtly trembled; and which now threatens them with an invaſion, and the total overthrow of their Republic, the ruin of their commerce and property, by an unprovoked and wanton declaration of war, to give a colour to the injuſtice and ambition of the French.

It has always been the policy of France to create prejudices and miſunderſtandings between the Engliſh and the Dutch. In England their hirelings have labored hard to prejudice the people of Great Britain againſt the Dutch. And in Holland their mercenary writers have been no leſs induſtrious to prejudice the Dutch againſt the Engliſh. Unfortunately for that celebrated Republic, French arts have too much ſucceeded through *falſe patriots*, repugnant to the natural and true intereſt of the United Provinces. For the real intereſt of the Dutch Republic and England are the ſame. The inhabitants of both nations are few comparatively,

ratively, and both Proteſtant governments; they are alſo linked like a chain in trade. It is equally the intereſt of Holland to keep up the credit of our funds, as it is our own, ſince great part of their fortunes are lodged in them; and therefore it muſt alſo be manifeſtly the intereſt of England to be in conſtant friendſhip with Holland, and to act upon the powerful principles of mutual intereſt, and that wiſe ſyſtem of reciprocity.

reservation

You ſee, my Lords and Gentlemen, the important criſis that alarms every nation, and, in a particular manner, threatens Great Britain and Holland, with the moſt deſtructive ſyſtem of politics that ever endangered *the balance of power in Europe*, which is the greateſt object as it is the ſecurity of all. You will own that the proſpect looks black around, and requires the utmoſt attention and ſkill of the pilot. His Majeſty's Parliament is the pilot of this powerful nation, and the guardian of our incomparable conſtitution. A pilot whoſe faithful and animated

mated exertion will preſerve the ſtate veſſel from the heavy ſtorm that threatens all Europe with deſtruction: a political ſtorm, that aims at the ſubverſion of every government, to ſubſtitute the tyrannical reign of anarchy and confuſion.

The danger is certainly great, but the greateſt misfortune is, that the public (I mean not only the people of England, but of all Europe) are ſo lulled by the arts of the French, that they do not ſee their deſigns, nor perceive that they have not only formed a plan for univerſal power, but have executed it in part, and prepared for the reſt. Their greateſt policy is, to *hide their deſigns* under pretended moderation, and the love of ſubſtantial juſtice. It was upon this principle of duplicity that they affected great friendſhip for the Americans, but the true motive for aſſiſting them was to leſſen the power and intereſt of this country, and to increaſe their own. Not that the French think it juſt to encourage the rebellious ſubjects

jects of any ſtate, but finding it conducive to their ambitious purpoſes they diſregarded the juſtice. Power and intereſt will ever be the ruling principle of the French nation, to which they will never ſcruple to ſacrifice every conſideration that regards the rights and intereſts of other nations. Of this unjuſt and injurious principle we have an early inſtance in their new government: For, notwithſtanding the jeſuitical profeſſions of moderation, and the love of ſubſtantial juſtice, ſo pompouſly diſplayed by the National Convention, (to conceal from the eyes of Europe their true principles) the French have manifeſted the ſame ſyſtem of duplicity and treachery, that diſtinguiſhed their old government, that has ever been their national character, and which no revolution in their government can alter. Indeed, France has for ages had in view the aggrandizing of her dominions, and Lewis XIV. publicly aimed at univerſal monarchy. And although the French have

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overthrown monarchical government, they have adopted the old ſyſtem of convulſing other nations, and ſubverting other governments, to increaſe their own power.

FENELON, Archbiſhop of Cambray, ſaw and abhorred the ambitious deſign; he therefore, guarded his pupil, the Duke of Burgundy, againſt the deluſion of flatterers, and of the ambitious meaſures which his grandfather vainly thought led to true glory.

This piece is curious, and was really written as inſtructions for *the rule of his conſcience:* I believe it will be uſeful in the preſent ambitious, and unjuſt purſuits of the French nation, to inſert a paſſage from the inſtructions, that ſhows the character of that nation, which has a ſtrong and reſtleſs propenſity to ambition, againſt which national ſpirit of empire, an able and good confeſſor thought it neceſſary to guard and admoniſh one of their princes.

"Neighbouring ſtates are not only obliged to behave mutually towards each other, according to the rules of juſtice and honeſty, but ought likewiſe, as well for the ſake of their common intereſt, to form themſelves into a kind of ſociety or general republic; to preſerve that wiſe *equilibrium*, which is called *the balance of power in Europe*, and which ſhould be ſacred, becauſe it is the common ſecurity.

"It ſhould be held as a maxim, that *the greateſt power will in time, always prevail over, and overthrow the reſt, unleſs the latter unites to keep the balance even.* There is no reaſon to hope, that amongſt mankind a ſuperior power ſhould conſtantly be kept within the bounds of a ſtrict moderation, or that it ſhould not be diſpoſed to deſire more when ſtrong, than it was able to obtain in its greateſt weakneſs. Though there even was a prince of ſo much perfection, as to make ſuch a wonderful uſe of his proſperity, the wonder would ceaſe with his reign. The natural ambition of

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ſovereign princes, the flatteries of their counſellors, and the prejudice of whole nations, will not allow us to think it poſſible, that one nation, which has it in its power to conquer others, ſhould abſtain from it, for whole ages; one reign, diſtinguiſhed by ſuch an extraordinary diſplay of juſtice, would be the ornament of hiſtory, and a prodigy never more to be ſeen again. We muſt therefore rely upon fact and daily obſervation, that *every nation is deſirous of prevailing over all the other that lay round it. Every nation, therefore, is obliged, for its own ſecurity, to be continually upon its guard, to prevent the exceſſive growth of power in every neighbourhood.* To hinder a neighbour from growing too powerful, is not to do evil; it is to ſecure ourſelves from ſlavery, and our neighbours alſo; it is to ſtand up in the cauſe of liberty, tranquillity, and the public ſafety; *for the aggrandizing of a nation beyond certain bounds, changes the general ſyſtem of all the nations that have any relation to it.* For inſtance: The ſeveral ſucceſſions that

fell into the houſe of Burgundy, and then thoſe which advanced the houſe of Auſtria, changed the face of all Europe. All Europe had reaſon to apprehend an univerſal monarchy under Charles V. eſpecially after Francis I. had loſt the battle of Pavia, and was taken priſoner.

" It is certain that a nation, which had no direct quarrel with Spain, had, notwithſtanding, at that time *a right, in regard to public liberty, to oppoſe the rapid courſe of that power, which ſeemed ready to ſwallow up all before it.*

" Private perſons have no right to oppoſe the increaſe of riches in their neighbours, becauſe we may ſuppoſe, that this increaſe in one, cannot be the ruin of the reſt. There are written laws, and magiſtrates to reſtrain the wrong, and violences committed between families unequal in ſubſtance; but with ſtates the caſe is far otherwiſe. *The too great increaſe of one may be the ruin and ſlavery of all the others, who are neighbours to it*; nor are there either written laws or judges appointed, to

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ſerve as a barrier againſt the invaſion of the moſt powerful. They have always a right to ſuppoſe, that *the moſt powerful will at length exert its ſtrength, when there ſhall be no other force of a like degree to put a ſtop to its progreſs.* Thus every prince has a right, and is even obliged, to prevent ſuch an increaſe of power in his neighbour, as will expoſe both his own people and all the other neighbouring people, to the approaching danger of ſlavery without redemption.

" For inſtance: Philip II. King of Spain, after he had conquered Portugal, had a mind to make himſelf maſter of England. I know well that his title was ill grounded, for he had no claim, but by Queen Mary his wife, who died without children. Elizabeth, who was illegitamate, had no right to reign; the crown belonged to Mary Stuart and her ſon. But ſuppoſing that the right of Philip II. was inconteſtible, all Europe would have had reaſon notwithſtanding, to have oppoſed his ſettlement in England; becauſe the addition

dition of ſo mighty a kingdom to his dominions in Spain and Italy, Flanders, the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, would have enabled him to give law, eſpecially by his maritime force, to all the powers of Chriſtendom. In this caſe *ſummum jus, ſumma injuria*; a particular right of ſucceſſion or donation ought to yield to the natural law for the ſecurity of ſo many nations. In a word, *whatever overthrows the equilibrium, and gives the deciſive ſtroke for univerſal power, cannot be juſt*; though it were even founded upon the written laws of a particular country. The reaſon is, that theſe written laws of a particular people, cannot prevail over the natural law of liberty and the common ſecurity, engraved in the hearts of all the other people in the world. *Were a power riſes to ſuch a height, that all the other neighbouring powers together are no longer able to reſiſt it; all the others have a right to combine together to prevent that increaſe*, in conſequence of which it would be too late to defend the common liberty; but before ſuch leagues, which tend to prevent the too great increaſe of power in a ſtate,

ſtate, can be lawfully formed, the caſe muſt be real and preſſing; the league muſt likewiſe be only defenſive; or at leaſt made no farther offenſive, than as a juſt and neceſſary defence ſhall find itſelf included in the ſcheme of an aggreſſion; there muſt alſo, in treaties of offenſive leagues, ſuch fixed bounds be always ſet, as never to deſtroy a power under pretence of limiting it. *This care to keep up a kind of equality and equilibrium amongſt neighbouring nations, is that which ſecures the common repoſe.*

"In this reſpect all the nations that are neighbours to each other, and united by commerce, make up a great body and a kind of community. For inſtance: Chriſtendom makes a kind of general republic; which has its intereſts, its apprehenſions, its precautions to obſerve. All the members, which compoſe this great body, are under obligations to each other for the ſake of the common good, and to themſelves for the ſecurity of their country, *to prevent ſuch a progreſs in any*

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one of their members as would ſubvert the equilibrium, and turn to the inevitable ruin of all the other members of the ſame body. Whatever changes or alters this general ſyſtem of Europe, is too dangerous, and draws after it an infinite train of evils.

"All the neighbouring nations are ſo united by their intereſt to each other, and to the whole body of Europe, that *the leaſt particular advances are capable of altering this general ſyſtem*, which conſtitutes the equilibrium, and wherein alone the public ſecurity can conſiſt. Take away one ſtone from an arch, and the whole building ſhall fall, becauſe all the ſtones are ſupported by their preſſure againſt each other.

"Humanity, therefore, lays the neighbouring nations under a mutual obligation *to defend the common ſafety againſt a neighbouring ſtate, which becomes too powerful*; as there are mutual obligations amongſt fellow citizens for the liberty of their country, whereof he is a member, every nation owes ſtill more to the repoſe and ſafety of the univerſal republic

public whereof it is a member, and in which all the countries of particular perſons are included.

" Defenſive leagues are therefore juſt and neceſſary, when the buſineſs really is to prevent a particular power from growing to ſuch a height, as to be able to invade the whole. Nor has this ſuperior power a right to break the peace with other inferior powers, merely upon account of their defenſive league, becauſe they have a right to make it, and are even under obligations ſo to do.

" As to an offenſive league, it depends upon circumſtances. It ſhould be grounded upon breaches of the peace, or *upon the detention of ſome country belonging to the allies*, or upon the certainty of ſome other reſembling foundation. Farther, as I have already obſerved, ſuch treaties ſhould be always limited to conditions, that may prevent the conſequences which are frequently ſeen to follow, when one nation lays hold of the neceſſity of humbling another, which aſpires to uni-

verſal tyranny, in order to aſpire to it itſelf in its turn. The proper way of making treaties of alliance, as well as the juſteſt and honeſteſt, is to make them very expreſs; free from all equivocal terms, and preciſely limited to the certain benefit you more immediately deſire to obtain from them."

You ſee, My Lords and Gentlemen, the wiſe and moderate maxims of the Archbiſhop; but the French have acted diametrically oppoſite to them. They have taken all meaſures, which they will purſue as often as opportunities offer, to eſtabliſh the firſt ſyſtem mentioned by the good prelate, which is to be abſolutely ſuperior to all the other powers even when united; that is to ſay, they aſpire to univerſal power, which was the ſtate of the Romans and of Charlemagne: a ſtate of ambition and injuſtice, which is not to be deſired or endured: *First*, It is not to be deſired, becauſe the deſign is very dangerous; for ſtates are often ruined by the folly of theſe ambitious purſuits.

purſuits. *Secondly*, It is not to be endured, becauſe it cannot be obtained without great wrongs and violence of all ſorts: you muſt ſeize upon what does not belong to you, and do it by wars abominable, both as to their duration and extent. And as this ſeems to be the mad ſyſtem of ambition, which the French are now violently purſuing, to overthrow all the governments of Europe, it is theintereſt of Great Britain and her allies to oppoſe, with all their ſtrength, the deſigns of the new government of France; in order to prevent the fatal effects of their raſh conduct, by co-operating with the Emperor and the King of Pruſſia, which will not only defeat the purpoſes of the French in Germany, Italy, &c. but will alſo enable thoſe powerful monarchs to act defenſively in favour of His Majeſty's Electoral Dominions, and the United Provinces; but to act offenſively and vigorouſly againſt theFrench, to defeat the extravagant deſigns of their new ſyſtem and preſerve, with *the balance*

of power, the common intereſt, and the general tranquillity.

Leagues and alliances between the powers attacked and endangered, ſays the Archbiſhop, are the beſt means of ſecurity againſt the ambition and injuſtice of the moſt powerful nations. The French found that an alliance was what brought them to the brink of ruin in Queen Ann's war. They ſaw that the Houſe of Auſtria was the great ſupport of that Alliance, and therefore they endeavoured to ruin that Houſe. And ſince the French fear Alliances, it is evidently our intereſt to make them.

Intereſt, they ſay, never lies. It is the intereſt even of Spain to oppoſe the alarming ſyſtem of France. It is the intereſt of the United Provinces; it is the intereſt of the King of Sardinia; it is the intereſt of all the German Princes, and of all the powers of Europe, to oppoſe the views of the French nation, and to form a confederacy againſt the contagion of their principles, and the

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danger that threatens every eſtabliſhed ſyſtem of Government.

The preſent criſis is of the utmoſt importance to Europe in general, and in particular to Great Britain, whoſe ſtake is deep, and therefore our ſituation requires the aſſiſtance of His Majeſty's faithful Parliament, and, indeed, of all His loyal ſubjects, to exert the utmoſt ſtrength of their genius in defence of their amiable King and excellent Conſtitution. Every individual ſhould lend his aſſiſtance, ſince upon ſuch an emergency, every ſubject is required by his duty to God, to his King, and to his Country, to act with vigour againſt the common enemy of Great Britain and Europe.

The two Houſes of Parliament are the guardians of the nation, and the careful watchmen of our domeſtic rights, and our foreign intereſt. In arbitrary countries, the moſt excellent princes have often been the dupes and ſacrifices of the cabals and combinations of artful ſtateſmen; while the ſovereigns

vereigns who have acted by the advice of honeſt and able counſellors, and who, like our gracious Sovereign, have truſted to the States of the Realm, or Parliaments, have lived with honour, ſafe from ſuch combinations and conſpiracies to life's extremeſt verge. Edward II. Edward III. and Queen Elizabeth, wiſely truſted to their Parliaments; who, like careful watchmen, diſcovered all machinations and plots againſt the dignity of the crown and the true intereſt of the people, as well by foreign enemies as domeſtic foes. GEORGE III. as excellent a a Prince as ever filled the throne of this or any other kingdom, with the ſame wiſdom and public virtue, places a conſtitutional and thorough confidence in his parliament, and in the integrity of miniſters of tried patriotiſm, who produce themſelves, with unexampled ſpirit, in oppoſition to ſlow, irreſolute, and puſillanimous meaſures, flowing from timid minds; while *pretended patriots*, like ſallies of falſe friends and weak adviſers,

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endeavour to damp the ſpirits of the people, and to delay the neceſſary and vigorous meaſures of executive government.

This ſmall tribute to our amiable Sovereign, and to a well-choſen Adminiſtration, leads me to the conſideration of what has lately paſſed in Parliament upon this important buſineſs. It is an old obſervation, and a juſt one, that "a talking Virtue is a ſuſpected Virtue;" for, it has been found, that men who pretend great zeal for church or ſtate, have ſeldom any regard for either. This may, without breach of charity, be applied to the Minority. I admire the abilities of ſome of them, but am ſorry I cannot admire their principles; which, in my opinion, are ſubverſive of the common intereſt. I ſpeak, in general, with very few exceptions. I admire the inflexible virtue and integrity of a few, whoſe ſentiments exalt human nature, and would do honour to any ſtate, and to any age. But, while I reſpect and love them, I lament, in proportion as I think

think them an honour to ſociety, that their political principles are miſtaken, and are oftener, in my apprehenſion, the effect of other men's paſſions and views, than the reſult of their own honeſt hearts and generous minds.

The preſent oppoſition to Government, commonly called the Minority, is a mere deluſion, and, in regard to public virtue, it is like "the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion." But, ſince the temper of the times (and a bad temper it is) gives ſome ſanction to theſe vociferous gentlemen, and as a general charge may appear more invidious than convincing, I ſhall give more ſolid proofs of my objection to the political principles of the Minority.

When men are found to exult in the miſfortunes of their country and the diſhonour of as amiable a Sovereign as ever filled and adorned a Throne—when ſuch men, in the ſacred character of the aſſertors of our rights, and the guardians of our liberties, have a ſecret ſatisfaction in the general calamity,

and

and endeavour to wreck the ſtate veſſel, by ſurrendering the honour and intereſt of the nation to our enemies—I ſay, when ſuch talking-deluſive-ſtateſmen pretend to the excluſive confidence of the nation, for their ſuperior wiſdom and virtue; what man of common ſenſe will not diſcover the *trick* that is palmed upon a credulous people? And what man, with a common ſhare of public virtue, or even of ſelf-love, will not join with me in lamenting the impoſition, and condemning the duplicity of ſuch characters?

Leaving theſe ſtate-phyſicians with horror, and their deluded followers with pity for their credulity, I paſs to the more ſolid and ſatisfactory conſideration of men who are not under the influence of the ſame ſelfiſh and party motives. Men who, being actuated by the nobleſt conſiderations, are incapable of betraying their country, and ſacrificing every thing dear to the nation, for the gratification of private views and party purpoſes.

As theſe men, in power, act from principle and conviction, ſo, when they happen to be miſtaken, the miſtake ſhould liberally be imputed to its true cauſe; and we ſhould lament the imperfection of human nature, which is diſcernable even in men of the cleareſt heads and the pureſt hearts. But while we lament, what all great nations have at times lamented, that unforeſeen circumſtances have happened to fruſtrate our national ſyſtem of tranquillity, which is ſo deſirable to a commercial people, we ſhould wiſh that the promoters of ſuch pacific meaſures may not be diſcouraged, nor diſagree among themſelves about what is now inevitable, but which they may remedy by an early attention to the conſequences. Were they to diſagree at this alarming period, when time is ſo precious and activity ſo neceſſary, it would be an additional misfortune, more fatal to the nation, perhaps than the unlucky cauſe of it. Unanimity, at preſent, is not barely a virtue, but it is the

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greateſt national bleſſing; it is a God-like attribute from whence muſt flow timely and vigorous exertions; and from which muſt reſult what Alexander ſaid he kept for himſelf—*hope*—in the virtue of a good cauſe and the wiſdom of a glorious defence.

We know that perſons have always been employed in this credulous country by our enemies in time of war, and theſe hirelings, under the maſk of *Patriotiſm*, have exerted all their ſkill to create confuſion by which the vigour of the war languiſhes, and the enemy is benefited by the delay. This is the treachery of domeſtic foes who betray their country. But there is a claſs of higher rank and greater ablities, who do more miſchief, by unhappily waſting in diſpute that time which ſhould be employed to ſtrengthen the hands of executive government.

That the ableſt men ſhould waſte the moſt valuable moments in declamation, to ſhew more the powers of oratory than the love of their country, is a great misfortune

to the nation, as the deluſion delays the neceſſary meaſures of Government, and defeats the nobleſt objects. This deluſive declamation in Parliament, is rendered more unfortunate by the effect it has out of doors, and the advantage which hireling writers and incendiaries take of the licentiouſneſs of the times, to ſtrengthen ſedition and increaſe a ferment in the nation.

It has long been a practice with France, and that has been of infinite ſervice to her, to gain, by corruption, all the hireling writers, pamphleteers, and ſome of the newſpaper writers, whoſe papers are thoſe from whom the people have their information and inſtruction, and upon whom the multitude, or the unthinking part of the nation, pin their faith, ſo ſtrong indeed as not to be convinced either by the arguments of diſpaſſionate men, or the conviction of their own eyes.

Theſe hirelings are inſtructed to cry out for thoſe meaſures which are calculated to

inſure their own deſtruction, and to promote the purpoſes of his Majeſty's enemies. To this end they inculcate ſuch doctrines as are proper for the views of France, and uſe all their ſophiſtry and the prejudices of the people for that purpoſe, under the pretence of *patriot ſchemes* and the good of Britain; for writing or ſpeaking for France directly would be too bare-faced, it would ſhock the people and diſappoint the deſign.

Either infatuation or deluſion carry ſome men ſo far to promote the purpoſes of France that they boldly avow it in the Great Aſſembly of the Nation; and take a pride in avowing that they carry on a private correſpondence in France with men who are inimical to this country. They glory in a correſpondence with men who are in a ſtate of hoſtility to this government. They think it an honour to ſpeak well of the greateſt enemies of this country, and boaſt of a connection which, in France or in any other country, would ſoon put an end to their exiſtence.

exiſtence. Whether ſuch abſurd, impolitic and dangerous declamation ariſes from treachery or infatuation I will not ſay; but, without breach of charity, I may pronounce it to be both unjuſt and impolitic; it having not only all the appearance but all the effect of treachery; ſince it waſtes that valuable time in promoting the purpoſes of enemies which ſhould be employed to forward our own.

Some bold ſpirits may ſmile at this remark, but it is too true and important to be treated ludicrouſly. The lenity of our government is our greateſt misfortune. The liberty of the preſs and the liberty of ſpeech are bleſſings of the greateſt magnitude; but the lenity of Government, in not drawing the line and fixing the diſtinction between a virtuous freedom and a treacherous licentiouſneſs, is evidently the greateſt curſe; and indeed a curſe of ſuch a nature that we are not ſecure under the *falſe delicacy* of ſo mild a government.

The unconſtitutional and unneceſſary aſſociations of the people to conſult about the

the affairs of the nation, at a period when their repreſentatives (to whom they have delegated all their conſtitutional right) are aſſembled for that purpoſe, ſhews a turbulent ſpirit, repugnant to the intereſt, and ſubverſive of the dignity of the nation. It ſhews how buſy our domeſtic and foreign enemies are to poiſon the minds of the people, to create confuſion and delay, to defeat our objects and to accelerate thoſe of our enemies: a deſign which, as it is of the moſt alarming nature, will, undoubtedly, merit the earlieſt attention of the legiſlative power, and the ableſt exertions of executive government.

The *third* Edward chaſtiſed Philip the auguſt, and his ſon John. The *third* William ſtunned Lewis XIV. And may the *third* George reduce the French to follow reaſon and juſtice, and reſtore peace and ſecurity to Europe!

FINIS.

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